

Media Release

Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

Scott Mascher – Sheriff

255 E. Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ 86301

Dwight D'Evelyn - Media Coordinator

928-777-7441



August 8, 2016

Again, Rescue 1 provides a critical Link in locating Missing Camper

On August 5, 2016, at approximately 10:30 pm, YCSO dispatchers received a call that a 55-year-old Prescott man was overdue and apparently missing from the Camp Wood area northwest of Prescott. The man had driven his truck, with attached camper shell, to the area the previous day, August 4th, to spend one night and then return home. Out of concern for his well-being several of the man's friends drove to the area and located his vehicle but could find him. Calls to his cell phone went unanswered.



Rescue 1 arrives with missing camper

A YCSO Forest Patrol deputy activated the Yavapai County Search and Rescue Team's Backcountry Unit, and Jeep Posse. Searchers scoured roads and trails leading away from the man's campsite throughout the night, but could not locate the missing camper. The search efforts were complicated by recent monsoon storms along with steep and heavily wooded terrain. The missing man's cell phone was eventually found in his unoccupied camper.

When daylight broke on August 6, YCSO's Rescue 1 Helicopter was deployed and as the aircraft was flying to the target area, the pilot spotted a large reflective emergency blanket on a hilltop. Next to the blanket was a man waving his arms to attract attention. Rescue 1 landed and confirmed it was the missing camper. The man was airlifted back to his campsite and search staging area. He was in good condition with no injuries.

The man told deputies that he hiked from camp the prior morning (August 5), wearing only a t-shirt, shorts and lightweight shoes. He carried some water, trail snacks and an emergency pack. At some point, he realized he was lost. He had brought a GPS device as part of his gear for the trip, but only activated it after realizing he was lost and as a result, did not have coordinates for his campsite. He walked until dark and then attempted to start a fire, but the rain made it difficult. The camper bedded down for the night, drank rainwater and then used his emergency blanket to signal the helicopter at daybreak.

Lessons – this camper was smart to share his itinerary with a friend which allowed rescue personnel to get involved quickly when he did not return as scheduled. The use of a reflective emergency blanket was extremely helpful in alerting the Rescue 1 pilot as to his whereabouts. The rescue could have been expedited if the camper had a cell phone available to report his predicament quickly. The cell phone call would also allow dispatchers to obtain his GPS coordinates for rescue personnel.

Citizens can contact the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office with information or questions at 928-771-3260

or the YCSO website: www.vcsoaz.gov